

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 09313 221716Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
/028 W

-----079486 230141Z /65

R 221638Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO USMISSION USNATO
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8736

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 09313

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, GW, NATO
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC REPORTING: DR. JOHANN (OR HANS)
CHRISTIAN LANKES, FRG'S NEW A/SYG IN NATO

REFS: (A) USNATO 4814; (B) BONN A-404, APRIL 29, 1969
(NOTAL); (C) BONN A-733, AUGUST 16, 1972
(NOTAL); (D) BONN A-557, NOVEMBER 26, 1975
(NOTAL); (E) BONN 1223 (NOTAL); (F) BONN 1408
(NOTAL)

1. WE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL IN RESPONSE TO
USNATO'S REQUEST (REF A). OUR SKETCH IS BASED ON
EMBASSY FILES (REFS B, C, AND D), AND ON RECENT
TALKS WITH FRG OFFICIALS (REFS E AND F). THIS EMBASSY
HAS HAD LITTLE DIRECT CONTACT WITH LANKES IN RECENT
YEARS.

ASSESSMENT

2. THOUGH ABLE AND HARD-WORKING, LANKES HAS SUFFERED
AT LEAST TWO MAJOR SETBACKS IN HIS DIPLOMATIC CAREER.

A. SEKOU TOURE PNG'D HIM IN 1971, ALLEGEDLY FOR PLOT-
TING TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT OF GUINEA. WE HAVE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 09313 221716Z

NEVER SEEN ANY EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT SUCH A CHARGE.

B. ON JANUARY 22, 1978, THE ETHIOPIAN PROVISIONAL
MILITARY GOVERNMENT (EPMG) GAVE LANKES 24 HOURS
TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THE OFFICIAL REASON WAS THE
FRG'S "ONE-SIDED SUPPORT" FOR SOMALIA, EXEMPLIFIED
BY SOME UNFORTUNATE REMARKS MADE AT THE TIME BY THE

THEN FRG AID MINISTER RE FRG ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA.
FOREIGN OFFICE SOURCES TOLD US LATER THAT THEY
BELIEVED THE EPMG, IN LARGE PART DUE TO THE PRODDING
OF THE GDR, HAD DECIDED TO CURTAIL ITS RELATIONS WITH
BONN, AND THAT LANKES' EXPULSION WAS DUE MORE TO THAT
DECISION THAN TO THE QUESTION OF FRG AID POLICY
VIS-A-VIS SOMALIA. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT LANKES
HAD IRRITATED THE EPMG WITH HIS ARROGANT (DESCRIBED
AS "PRUSSIAN") BEARING AND OFTEN HIGH-HANDED APPROACH.

3. AMERICANS WHO WORKED WITH LANKES IN PAST YEARS
REPORTED THAT HE WAS HARD-WORKING AND CAPABLE, BUT
ALSO QUITE RANK-CONSCIOUS, OCCASIONALLY SHORT-
TEMPERED AND RATHER LONG-WINDED. THEY FOUND LANKES
WELL-INFORMED ON THE US AND ALWAYS READY TO COOPERATE
WITH USG OFFICIALS. LANKES IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH
AND FRENCH. HE IS MARRIED TO A GRACIOUS DUTCH WOMAN.

CURRICULUM VITAE

4. BORN IN MUNICH ON DECEMBER 4, 1919, LANKES STUDIED
ENGINE-BUILDING AND MINING. HE OBTAINED A DOCTORATE
IN ENGINEERING IN 1950. AFTER WORKING FOR A WHILE IN
THE PRIVATE SECTOR, LANKES JOINED THE FOREIGN SERVICE
IN 1951. HE WAS FIRST POSTED TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE,
AND THEN TO FRG MISSIONS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND WASHINGTON.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 09313 221716Z

IN 1958-1961, HE WAS ON DETAIL TO THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC
COMMUNITIES.

5. LANKES WAS CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN BANGKOK IN
1961-1964. HE SERVED IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE DURING
1964-1969, BECOMING AN EXPERT ON DISARMAMENT AND MBFR
ISSUES. LANKES WAS FRG AMBASSADOR IN CONAKRY FROM
1969 TO 1971. AFTER HIS EXPULSION, HE WORKED BRIEFLY
IN BONN (1971-1972) AND THEN BECAME AMBASSADOR TO
LEBANON (MAY 1972 TO 1975). LANKES OBTAINED AGREEMENT
FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA ON OCTOBER 15, 1975.

6. SINCE RETURNING TO BONN, LANKES HAS BEEN READING IN
ON HIS NEW BRIEF AS NATO A/SYG. WE UNDERSTAND FROM THE
FOREIGN OFFICE THAT HE IS NOW SICK, BUT THAT HE HOPES TO
ARRIVE IN BRUSSELS BY LATE JUNE.
STOESSEL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN09313
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780216-0240
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780535/aaaabdbb.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 71c98a99-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 USNATO 4814, 78 BONN A-404
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2621026
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIOGRAPHIC REPORTING: DR. JOHANN (OR HANS) CHRISTIAN LANKES, FRG'S NEW A/SYG IN NATO
TAGS: PINR, GE, NATO, (LANKES, JOHANN CHRISTIAN), (LANKES, HANS CHRISTIAN)
To: USNATO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/71c98a99-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014